



NEWSLETTER

BRITISH MUSEUM
(NATURAL HISTORY)

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SPRING 1990

NUMBER 1

ACE BASIN FOCUS OF SPRING MEETING

The Carolina Bird Club spring meeting April 27-29, 1990 will focus on South Carolina's ACE Basin. Called by some the Pearl of the Lowcountry, the ACE Basin is the 300,000 acrea coastward from U.S. Highway 17A circumscribed by the Ash-poo, Combahee and South Edisto rivers. It offers some of the most valuable and diverse wildlife habitat on the East Coast. Bald Eagles, Wood Storks and Osprey nest in the area, and it is an important stopover point and wintering area for migratory rap-tors.

Headquarters for the meeting will be the Holiday Inn in Beaufort, SC. Reservations should be made as soon as possible as a limited number of rooms are committed to our group. A reservation form for the Hol-iday Inn and a registration form for the meeting are included in the Newsletter. Advance registration is a great help to the Club and saves you \$1.00 over registration at the meeting. Registration will begin at 3:00 p.m. on Friday.

On Friday evening at 8:00 p.m. our speaker will be Michael Prevost, a biolo-gist who has the position of Project Coordinator for the ACE Basin Project which is a comprehensive project spon-sored by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, S.C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department, Ducks Unlimited, and the Nature Conservancy. Its purpose is to pro-tect and enhance habitat in the ACE Basin.

Saturday field trips will include full and half-day trips to Bear Island, Hilton Head Island, James W. Webb Wildlife Center, the Savannah spoil area, Hunting Island State Park, and the Savannah NWR. A few trips will be repeated Sunday morning. Birds which breed in the area include Wood Stork, Mottled Duck, Mississippi and American Swallow-tailed Kite, Bald Eagle, Black Rail, Purple Gallinule, Black-necked Stilt, Common Ground-Dove, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Swainson's Warbler, Painted Bunting, and Bachman's Sparrow. Of course in late April, anything might

turn up! This is a trip that you won't want to miss.

The annual business meeting of the Club will be held Saturday evening fol-lowed by our guest speaker, Tom Murphy. Mr. Murphy is the Lower Coastal Region Nongame Biologist for the S.C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department. He will give us an update on the Department's recent nongame efforts which include the Bald Eagle recovery plan.

DIRECTIONS TO MOTEL:

From Exit 33 off I-95 take US 17 north-east toward Charleston for 9 miles to Gar-dens Corner. Turn right (southeast) here on US 21. Follow US 21 for about 15 miles into the City of Beaufort. The Holi-day Inn is on the left at Lovejoy Street just before the intersection with SC 281. If you get to the National Cemetery, you have gone too far!

WINTER MEETING REPORT

That the North Carolina Outer Banks is one of the favorite CBC meeting places was proven again as 164 enthusiastic bird-ers registered for the winter meeting Febru-ary 2-4, 1990. An outstanding weekend was planned by ENC Member at Large, John Wright, with the assistance of wife Paula and the Greenville-River Park North Bird Club.

The Friday evening meeting got off to a nostalgic start with Bob Holmes reading a Raleigh News & Observer account by Charlotte Hilton Green of a December 5, 1947 trip to Pea Island by the N. C. Bird Club. Bob was 16 at the time and remembered how cold it was on the trucks provided by the Refuge. Am. Avocet and N. Gannet were described as rarities while Bald Eagles were "numerous." The most numerous duck was the Black Duck.

We were then introduced to the Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge by Bob

Noffsinger, Refuge Biologist. While the efforts to reintroduce the Red Wolf was in the news, of primary interest to birders was the work to convert land cleared for agricul-ture to habitat for waterfowl.

Saturday field trips were led by Ricky Davis, John Fussell, John Wright, and Harry LeGrand to all the usual spots from the Virginia line to Ocracoke. The species total reported at the Saturday evening countdown was 149.

Jeff Smith, Director of the Nags Head Woods Preserve, presented a slide illustrated program on this Nature Conser-vancy property during the Saturday evening program. It is considered to be one of the best remaining examples of coastal mari-time forest.

Plan now for similar good times at future meetings:

Sep. 21-23, 1990....Asheville, NC

Feb. 1-3, 1991.....Morehead City, NC

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Evelyn Dabbs, Nominating Committee Chairman, will present the following nominations at the annual meeting of the Carolina Bird Club:

President	Robin Carter Columbia, SC
ENC V-Pres.	Derb Carter Raleigh, NC
ENC Mem. at Lg.	Ricky Davis Zebulon, NC
WNC Mem. at Lg.	Patricia Wilkinson Shelby, NC
SC Mem. at Lg.	Lex Glover Lugoff, SC

Apr. 26-28, 1991....Greenville, SC

Sep. 27-2-, 1990....Nags Head, NC

BANDING HUMMINGBIRDS--A REAL CHALLENGE

BY
DOROTHY J. FOY

"You are a bander? What a great hobby." These are the words my husband and I often hear when someone meets us for the first time. I might say here that banding is NOT a hobby--it is hard, exacting, scientific work. Banding is a privilege given only to qualified individuals.

We have been banding for over 25 years; five serving an apprenticeship and 20 plus years under our own Masters Permit. A federal permit issued by the Fish & Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, and a state permit is required in order to band in your state of residence and/or choice. We are licensed in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina and Arizona. With the issuance of a Masters Permit (the highest permit one can secure for banding) one is allowed to band all birds *except* hummingbirds, waterfowl and endangered species. At the present time the Fish & Wildlife Service has declared a moratorium on the issuing of banding permits.

Hummingbird banding is completely different from regular bird banding. A specialized permit is required over and above the Masters Permit and a project outline must be submitted to the Fish & Wildlife Service before receiving the authorization to band hummingbirds.

The bands are received in sheet form, printed and numbered on paper thin aluminum. Each one is cut out individually, and all four sides are filed down to remove any nicks or rough edges that could injure the leg. After filing and shaping the band into a ring with the aid of specially made pliers, the bird is banded, and the band number is recorded on a field sheet. It is then weighed and several different measurements are taken including wing, tail and culmen. The feather molt is recorded on a special sheet if evident. After the bird is examined for ectoparasites, aged and sexed it is released. From the time the band is placed on the leg until release the time elapsed is less than five minutes.

Most banders take color photos of unusual or rare birds and send them to their state museum for permanent documentation. All information is recorded on a field sheet and then transferred to a government form which has room for information on 100 birds. This form is mailed to Laurel, Maryland. There it is entered into a computer and is available for use by all ornithologists doing research, students, and anyone else who has a need for this information.

I have had several hummers return to my front yard and back yard a year later. In

1989 I had seven return that were banded in 1988. Five were females and two were males. All five females raised young on or in the vicinity of our property.

A word about identification is in order here. **IN THE FIELD** the following should be noted: **Ruby-throated** - a young male is similar to the adult female and a young female is similar to the young male; **Rufous**- females and immature males are extremely similar to those of Allen's; **Allen's** - females and immature males **cannot** be separated safely from those of the Rufous. **IN THE HAND** various measurements, close observation of the sinuated wings and other characteristics clue the bander as to the sex of the hummingbird.

The genus *Selasphorus* is one of the most difficult to correctly identify in the field. Many birds of this genus like to investigate other areas so we find them here in North Carolina in the winter. Too many observers, eager for an identification, call these birds Rufous without sufficient evidence; forgetting about Allen's. Not only does that take away from the exactness of the identification, but it eliminates the other members of the genus from consideration. *PO Box 457, Oriental, NC 28571*.

"VANITY" PLATES CONTINUED

The Winter 1989 issue of the Newsletter carried a listing of birder's personalized auto license plates gathered at the fall meeting. Other members were requested to send in their plates, and the following is the result:

<u>OWNER</u>	<u>PLATE</u>	<u>STATE</u>
John M. Irvine, Jr.	FALCO	NC
Mike Peters	VULTURES	NC
Kenneth C. Parkes	AUKLET*	PA
Henry T. Armistead	CURLEW	PA
Henry T. Armistead	OSPREY	PA

* Mr. Parkes, who is Senior Curator of Birds at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburg, indicates that his plate is not in honor of the bird itself but for the American Ornithologists' Union parody journal handed out at the annual banquet. He has been associated with this publication for many years.

N. C. BREEDING BIRD SURVEY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

BY
HARRY LeGRAND

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The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is a continent-wide cooperative program sponsored jointly by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service. The primary goal of the BBS is to estimate population trends of the breeding bird species of the region, especially over long periods of time (i.e., 10 or more years). For example, the Loggerhead Shrike is down 95% in numbers on the North Carolina BBS routes in the last 20 years, whereas Eastern Bluebirds are up 369%. The BBS also permits computer mapping of the ranges and relative abundance of various species. In conjunction with the Audubon Christmas Bird Count data, it permits a comparison of the breeding and wintering distributions of a given species.

The BBS has been established since 1965, and since 1966 in North Carolina. Approximately 31 routes are located in the state, as of 1989. The 24.5 mile long routes are selected by the main office in Patuxent, Maryland, and thus observers cannot choose the starting point or the direction of a route. Observers make 50 stops, one half mile apart on the routes, and count all birds seen or heard for three minutes at each stop. Forms are provided to tally results at each stop. Each route begins 30 minutes before sunrise and takes about 4 hours for completion. A route is run only once a year, generally in early June. The observer is expected to run the

same route in future years to assure continuity of results.

I volunteered to become the new North Carolina coordinator for the BBS on the condition that the number of routes assigned to the state would be increased. Over the years, both of the Carolinas have lagged behind neighboring states in coverage. Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee all have over 50 routes and have much better coverage of routes (nearly 100%) than our states. In fact, only 22-23 of the 31 routes were run in 1989, a dreadful total. The main problem has been the lack of publicity. Many CBC birders either do not know about the BBS or perhaps have assumed it died a quiet death since nothing has been mentioned in the Newsletter or *The Chat* about the BBS. Frankly, the BBS is "alive but sick" in the Carolinas. I am looking for volunteers to cover North Carolina routes.

The attached map shows the current routes in the state, with the dot at the starting point. Routes marked with an "X" were not run in 1989. NOTE: the state has 13 *new* routes that were created recently. These have never been run. They are labeled as "NEW" on the map. You should also note the complete gap in routes in the Sandhills area of the south-central part of the state. This gap is due to the random process by which routes are selected by the computer. Presently, there are three routes per "latilong" block (one

degree of latitude by one degree of longitude), and starting points within each block are determined by random numbers. If we can get nearly complete coverage of these routes in 1990, we will be able to ask for four routes per block in 1991.

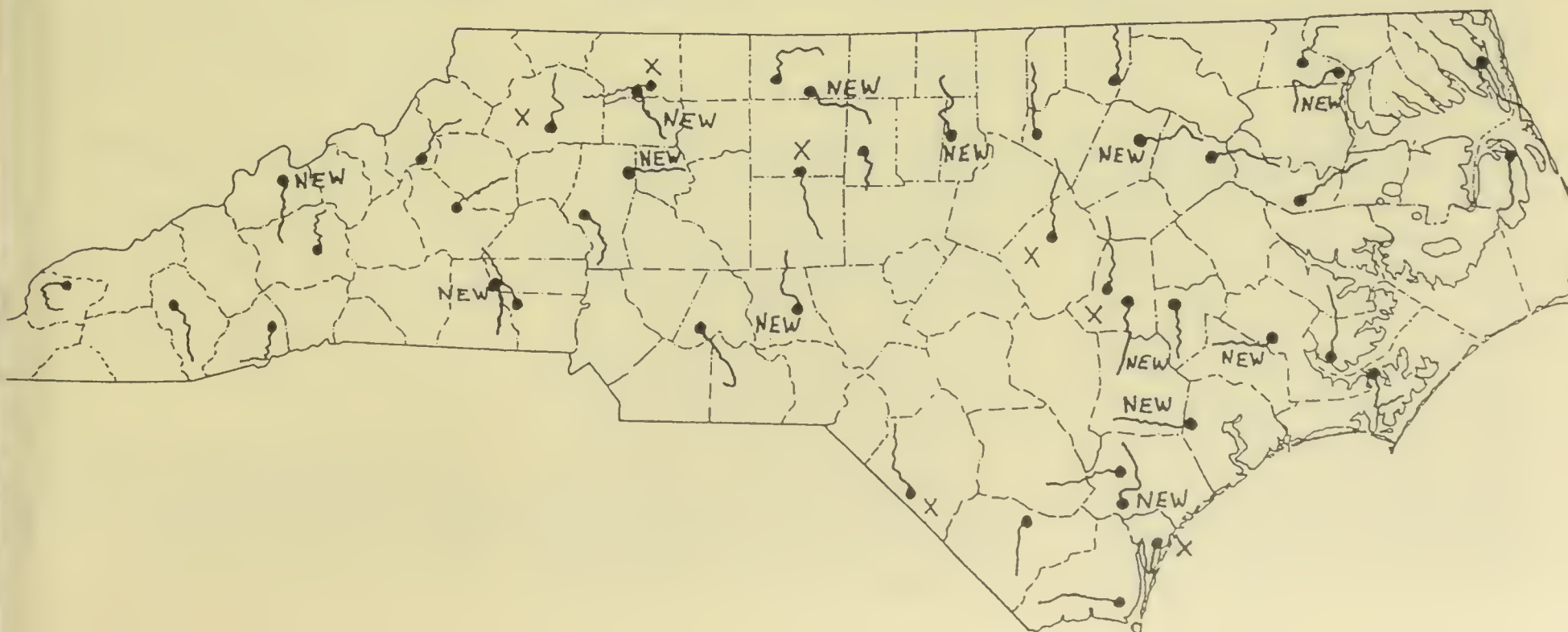
Feel free to indicate how many routes you might be able to run, and which routes ("X" and "NEW") you hope to cover. Merrill Lynch and J. E. Hudson presently run three routes each, and I hope to run more than that total in 1990. **IMPORTANT NOTE;** probably 75-80% of the birds recorded on a survey route will be heard only. Thus, it is important that you are completely familiar with the songs of all local species. You will not have time to go off into the woods to track down mysterious voices!

If you are interested in helping out with the BBS, please contact me by phone or in writing:

Harry LeGrand
N. C. Natural Heritage Program
P.O. Box 27687,
Raleigh, NC 27611
(919) 733-7701.

The national office sent me about 30 copies of its 200 page report entitled *The Breeding Bird Survey: its First Fifteen Years, 1965-1979* to give to new BBS volunteers. This is an excellent publication, and I will give one to each new volunteer as an incentive!

NORTH CAROLINA BREEDING BIRD SURVEY ROUTES - - 1990



BACKYARD BIRDING

with
FRANCES J. NELSON

D. J. Abraham of W. Columbia, SC has discovered a way to recycle cantaloupe seeds. He removes the seeds and their viscous attachment and places it on a flat board for the sun and wind to dry. He says that Cardinals particularly are attracted to the seeds.

* * * *

I, too, have found a "new" bird food, but mine comes from the November/December 1989 issue of *Bird Watcher's Digest* (p. 122):

MARVEL MEAL

1 cup peanut butter
4 cups corn meal
1 cup solid shortening
1 cup white flour

Mix to the consistency of putty and use in hanging feeders.

When I make the mix, I put mixed bird seed in half of it, but the birds don't seem to prefer it over the plain. I put the mixture in a net onion bag hanging in a tree, and the titmice, chickadees, and Pine Warblers eat frequently. My husband put globs of the mixture in 1 inch holes he'd drilled in a 12 inch length of cedar sapling, and the goldfinches eat from that.

* * * *

MORE JOURNAL JOTTINGS

I threatened to include more of these jottings if I did not hear from other members--I didn't, so once more:

The unidentified hawk I mentioned in the last Newsletter is an immature Sharp-shinned. It's been around since December, and it's getting less timid. In January, it began to spend two hours each morning perched on our back deck railing. After watching it, I fully understand the old saying "watching like a hawk," because it sits so patiently waiting for breakfast to fly nearby. I know it's an immature one because of the white spots on its back, but I wonder about its behavior, too. Does the sitting out in the open like it does mean it's an immature? I feel as if the hawk has

not learned to be inconspicuous when hunting prey. I have not seen it snare anything during the time it spends on the back deck, yet it returns daily. It really is a beautiful bird, but I resent its keeping the other birds away.

In December the sleet brought more birds. We'd seen Rufous-sided Towhees in the woods, but never near the house. I suppose the frozen ground forced them closer. Two pairs spent most days under our feeders. I still haven't decided whether the males or females are prettier. Their colors contrasting with the whiteness of the ground were startling, and they almost looked artificial. Of course, when the sleet finally melted, the towhees returned to their old habitat, but they were an added joy for a while.

In addition to the towhees, we also had a Pine Siskin and one female Evening Grosbeak who was at the backyard feeder one morning when we awoke. She didn't stay very long, and we have not seen her or any other grosbeaks since.

One January afternoon, I watched eight quail feeding beside our driveway. The ninth one was evidently standing guard, because it stood apart from the others, moving nothing but its head. After a few minutes, it must have determined that all was safe because it began feeding, too.

Also in January, a Yellow-rumped Warbler started visiting the suet feeder. With it, the Pine Warblers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, chickadees, Carolina Wrens, and titmice, the suet feeder had constant activity. And once in a while, a Cardinal would dip in for a bite.

A pair of Canada Geese arrived with February. Our domestic geese were not pleased with their company and chased the Canadas frequently, but the wild ones refused to leave during the day. They did leave just after sundown but returned the next morning. They've continued this pattern, and we can't figure out what's going on. We just hope that when the urge to lay eggs hits, the female is on our pond. We'd love to watch the couple raise their goslings.

We also had a Wood Duck pair stop by briefly. I looked out the door and saw what looked like decoys on the pond, but they only stayed a few minutes. I did have time

to marvel at them through the spotting scope, but they didn't stay long enough for me to photograph them. We still haven't put up a Wood Duck box (we haven't even built it yet), so I suppose we'll have to wait until next year to get a nesting pair.

All of this mild weather doesn't seem to have fooled the birds. We have not seen many new ones, although our property list is up to 62, so the birds must know something about the weather that we humans don't. They have just recently started singing and calling to one another, and the Red-bellied Woodpeckers have begun drilling nest holes, but we haven't seen any birds carrying nesting material. And we still have our winter Purple Finches, goldfinches, and White-throated Sparrows. Several of the goldfinches have started brightening up--one has gold epaulets and others have splotches of yellow here and there. In late February, we began to see more Cardinals and now have about 15-20 who come every evening to feed, so maybe spring really is on the way.

My husband and I attended our first CBC meeting in February at Nags Head, NC, and it was well worth it. We met some nice fellow birders, added new birds to our lists, and enjoyed the nightly lectures. If you've never been to one of the meetings, you owe it to yourself to go to at least one. But, beware--you might get hooked. We can hardly wait until the spring meeting in South Carolina.

One more time--this is supposed to be your column, not just mine. Please send material on backyard birding to me at 9776 Dogwood Hill Lane, Wake Forest, NC 27587.

NESTING NOTE

New South Carolina "Field Notes" Editor for *THE CHAT*, Dennis Forsythe, and Donna Clark, both of Charleston, SC are getting married on March 24.

* * * *

CBC Headquarters Secretary, Laura Becker, and husband, Dan, are expecting their first hatchling in May.

Mike Tove has announced three pelagic trips out of Oregon Inlet for 1990. Long-tailed Jaeger and South Polar Skua will be expected on the **May 26** trip and Band-rumped Storm-Petrel on **August 11**. The **September 8** trip will seek White-faced Storm-Petrel, but will include fishing for White Marlin. The trips will be aboard a new 70 foot boat which is fast and stable. Cost is \$65. Contact Mike at 303 Dunhagen Pl., Cary, NC 27511. Tel. (919) 460-0338.

Simon Thompson will be leading a FENCE Nature Center 8-day nature

expedition to the Amazon jungles of Peru. The cost is \$1598 from Miami with a 5-day optional Machu Picchu extension for \$598. Departure is **November 10, 1990**. Contact Simon at FENCE Nature Center, 500 Hunting Country Rd., Tryon, NC 28782. Tel. (704)859-9021.

Terry and Toby Gordon, CBC members from Pinnacle, NC, recommend the **Pungo River Inn**, 526 Riverview St., Belhaven, NC 27810, Tel. (919) 943-2117 to CBC members birding in the Lake Mattamuskeet, Swan Quarter area. This is a recently opened bed and breakfast inn

with "the best breakfast in the area." Fran Johnson is the innkeeper.

Harry LeGrand, Ann and Derb Carter, and Karen and Merryl Lynch have just returned from a three week trip to Ecuador. They missed the Cock-of-the-rock but spotted more than 500 species. An article for the summer Newsletter has been requested.

Have you been on a birding trip you would like to share with fellow CBC members? The Editor will welcome your account of such a trip or your recommendations on good birding areas.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND ORDER FORM

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Tel. () _____ (home) _____ (business) _____

ENTER/RENEW MEMBERSHIP AS INDICATED

SEND MATERIALS INDICATED

☐ Individual (\$12)	☐ Life (\$200)	☐ CBC Cloth arm patch \$1.50 ea., \$1.25 ea. in quantity
☐ Family (\$15)	☐ Patron (\$ 50)	☐ CBC Decals (water type) 75c ea., 50c ea. in quantity
☐ Student (\$ 6)		☐ Daily Checklists 10/\$1.00, 25/\$1.25, 50/\$2.50, 75/\$3.75
☐ Affiliate Club (\$15)		100/\$5.00
☐ Library/Institution (\$15)	Make check payable to Carolina Bird Club, Inc. and mail to PO Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611	

HOLIDAY INN RESERVATION FORM

Carolina Bird Club Spring Meeting, April 27-29, 1990

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

ROOMS (single or double occupancy) \$46.00 plus tax.

Please reserve _____ room(s) at \$46.00 per night plus tax. My check for the first night's lodging is enclosed. I will arrive _____ and depart _____.

Mail with deposit to HOLIDAY INN OF BEAUFORT, U.S. Highway 21 at Lovejoy St., Beaufort, SC 29902. Tel. (803) 524-2144.

REGISTRATION FORM

CBC Spring Meeting, April 27-29, 1990

Name(s) _____

(list each name for name tags)

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ member registrations at \$4 each and _____ nonmember registrations at \$5 each. Registration at meeting will be \$5 for members and \$6 for nonmembers.

Mail with check to CAROLINA BIRD CLUB, INC., PO Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ARLENE C. AASEBY
Chocowinity, NC

KEVIN HENNINGS
Charlotte, NC

ROBERT RAFFEL
Raleigh, NC

HAL BROADFOOT
Fayetteville, NC

VICTORIA HOYT
Charlotte, NC

RUDY RODRIGUEZ
Asheville, NC

DENNIS & LYNN BURNETTE
Greensboro, NC

FRANK M. JOLLY, III
Raleigh, NC

JENNIFER SECOSAN
Brevard, NC

NINA DAMERON
Greensboro, NC

JAMES S. JOHNSON (family)
Wilson, NC

ROGER SMITH
Lexington, SC

JOHN DAUGHTRY
Greenville, NC

MARGARET LAWRENCE
Winterville, NC

MELVIN TWIDDY, JR.
Manteo, NC

BILL & LOU DAVIS
Greenville, NC

HENRY & ELIZABETH LINK
Greensboro, NC

GEORGE & CONSTANCE UPDIKE
Brevard, NC

EDDIE & FAYE DOZIER
Greenville, NC

BOBBY MIZE
Burlington, NC

BILL & ANNE WEBSTER
Winston-Salem, NC

MARK EAKIN
Bridgeton, NC

JOHN ORCHARD
Cary, NC

MARGARET WOLOSCHKE
Raleigh, NC

M/M C. C. ELMORE
Gastonia, NC

BILL & MARY PAULSON
Chocowinity, NC

BRENDA WILLIAMS
Hubert, NC

EUGENE HACKNEY
Lumberton, NC

JEFFREY & ANNE PIPPEN
Durham, NC

MARJORIE WHITTAKER
Winter Park, FL

LAIRD & THELMA HARRINGTON
Chocowinity, NC

M/M PAUL PITMAN, JR.
Goldsboro, NC

GIFTS TO CBC ANNOUNCED

Laura Becker, CBC Headquarters Secretary, reported to the Executive Committee at its meeting in Nags Head that CBC is a beneficiary under the will of Richard E. Haymaker who died November 21, 1989 in Charleston. The bequest is for the endow-

ment fund as a memorial to his mother, Emma Vogelgesang Haymaker.

Laura also reported that CBC had received a \$1,000 anonymous gift from a member to be used in the discretion of the Club.

MORE NEEDED

Response to the appeal for funds to purchase a laser printer to produce *THE CHAT* has been limited. A total of \$115 had been received by February 1. The goal is \$3,500. Your tax deductible contributions would be greatly appreciated. Checks should be sent to Carolina Bird Club, Inc., P.O. Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611.

CBC NEWSLETTER is published quarterly by Carolina Bird Club, Inc., the ornithological society of the Carolinas, with headquarters at Raleigh, NC. CBC is a nonprofit corporation, founded in 1937, with membership open to anyone interested in birds, natural history and conservation. Members are encouraged to submit items of interest to CBC Newsletter, Clyde Smith, Editor, 2615 Wells Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27608.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB, INC.



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